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The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

Vol. XLIII JANUARY, 1935 No. 7

QUESTIONING

I asked the New Year, "What am I to do
The whole year through?"
The answer came,
"Be true."

I asked again, "And what am I to say
To those who pass my way?"
"The kindest words," he said,
"That you can say."

"What thoughts am I to think, day long,
year long?"
And clearly as a quick-struck gong,
The answer,
"Think no wrong."

"And what roads take across the earth's
worn sod
Where many feet have trod?"
Swift came the answer—
"Those that lead to God."

GRACE NOLL CROWELL.

THE SACRED THING

Like a flash-light on some dark river pool, come our Lord's words about the sacredness of human life. It is a mistake to say that He came to make life sacred. He does for us a better thing, so far as we will trust Him. He shows us that our human life is already dear to God and worthy of our care and honor. To God as well as man it is, under all its strange disguises, the most valuable thing on earth. You know that the mire of our city streets is made of the same elements as the glittering stones in the jeweler's show window. There is black dirt of soot and coal; but that is carbon, which, in its nobler form, is the diamond; while amethyst and emerald and ruby are but clay and iron in their purer forms. It is well for us to see the elements of a jewel in every common or degraded human form. It throws a new light on the making and the purpose of our ever-changing world.

We are too apt to come to God with complaints about the life which He has given us. It is clay; it is mire; it is crusted with folly and its heart is weariness. But Our Lord comes and bids us look again. We open our eyes to scan the gift, and, lo! it opens into crystals of honor, strength and peace. He meets us on our own ground, as He met the lawyer who tempted Him with what he thought a subtle question about the worth of life. "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" the lawyer asked. Our Lord was never taken by surprise. He knew men and He showed them that there were deeper meanings in the truths which they already knew than they had fathomed. This man was a doctor of the law; Christ told him that the summary of the teachings of the law which leaped at once to his tongue's end in answer to the question, "What readest thou?" contained not only the charter of the eternal life, but also of the life that is today on earth. "This do, and thou shalt live." And this is just what Jesus came to do for you and me, to show us that the path of obedience in which we are called to walk today, already is the true path of the enduring life.

This Jewish lawyer's answer is a memorable one. The summary of the ancient law he quoted stands today as a great light of righteous living kindled in the distant past. It is a beacon light of all true thought on conduct now. If God's revelation had no other proof, this word —which no man but the Master has attained to, much less has surpassed— would testify that its origin is no less than divine. Yet by the added word of

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Jesus it becomes far more than this lawyer knew. As Jesus took the five loaves and the few small fishes and made them food sufficient for the multitude; as he touched our common life and showed that it was the seed-opportunity of immortality, saying, "Neither shall men say, Lo! here: or Lo! there; for behold the kingdom is within you"; so he takes these words which we have all heard, and spoken, until perhaps they are as worn and thin as a long-used tire, and shows that they assert the sacredness of human life today, as well as the code of living for the far-continuing existence which man dreams about. Did you think the words a formula for heaven's using, a dry summary of theology to be heard and used on Sundays? They are the very law and substance of the eternal life, that life which has begun already; in reality there can be no other eternal life but this.

Here God is meeting us upon our own ground, as a father reasons with his child. Our life is a sacred thing, a present trust, not something we are coming to enjoy when death has intervened and brought us change. God is showing us how deep and high and wide the possibilities of our life may be today. All our postponements are but postponements of preparation. We are no less children of God, children whose lives are sacred, because we are just now in the school. He touches the Law that seems so cold, and lo! it is a torch put in our hand to guide us through the dark. He touches the clay of our common experiences, our neighborly meetings and greetings and relations; and, lo! they flash like the emerald which we are told is round about God's throne. For the law is of love; which is the one eternal thing, the light and atmosphere of any imaginable and endurable immortal life for men.

It would be idle to deny that we are entering here upon difficult territory for thought. All the history of the world seems to be a harsh denial of this teaching of the sacredness of the human individual life. War is against it. The conquests and extensions of barbarism and of civilization alike have been terribly costly in sufferings and death. For millenniums, security from enemies without and oppression from powers within seem, as we read the story, to have been the rare exception. Slow and bitter progress has been made toward recognition of this principle of the sacredness of every human life which Jesus laid down as the basis for human relations. Even in our proud American cities, human life is not secure against the murderer and the kidnaper.

This Lawyer, willing to justify himself, went on to ask the question, "And who is my neighbor?" And Jesus answered him with the parable of the Good Samaritan, forcing from the questioner the confession that the neighbor who fulfilled his duty was the one who showed mercy. The duty of neighborliness is to be an active one. It does not stop with theory; it seizes every opportunity for practice. The priest and Levite who passed the sufferer by on the other side of the road were thinking first of their own convenience. They shirked the duty of a common neighborliness, like the "hit and run" motor-car driver of today. The Samaritan had the springs of mercy in his heart because he was an unspoiled child of God.

There is a definition which must help us here. If we will remember always that our neighbor — our friend, our enemy, the man whom we admire, the man whom we are tempted to despise— is one of the men God loves, we may attain to something like the spirit of neighborliness which was natural to Jesus. That God loves every man—how incredible at times it seems! Too great

for comprehension now. That it is verified in the life and love of Christ, who said: "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." — By ISAAC OGDEN RANKIN in *Boston Transcript*.

"GREAT THOUGHTS FROM THE RELIGIONS OF MANKIND"

III. BUDDHISM

The birth of Buddha, in Kapilavastu, India, was in 550 B. C. Born a prince and raised in a royal family it was expected he would, in his maturity, rule as successor to his father. All accounts of Buddha's life agree as to the strength, gentleness, nobility and deep piety of his character.

Tiring of court life and sympathizing profoundly with the sickness, suffering, hardships and sorrows of his fellowmen, he asked himself, Is there anything abiding in the World, and concluded there was nothing but truth, the eternal law of things. "Let me know this law (he said) and I can give lasting peace to mankind. Then shall I become their deliverer."

To the great disappointment of his father, wife and friends he left the palace one night and put off the robes of a prince and put on those of a religious hermit, declaring "I shall never return to the palace till I have attained to the knowledge of the truth, the eternal law of things, and so become 'Buddha,' the enlightened."

He first went to the priests of the Brahma caste for help and for six years he practised the austerities of asceticism, to no avail. The wisest of them could not teach him true inner peace, the profound rest which was called "Nirvana."

At the age of twenty-nine he went off by himself and in his hermitage he believed there came to him, as an inner conviction, the knowledge of the eternal law of things. When he received this enlightenment, that was to enable him to rescue mankind from its woes, he was seated under a "Bo Tree" and had not moved for a day and a night.

Buddha named four truths as constituting the basis of his teachings. First, —All existence is evil, because all existence is subject to change and decay. Second,—The source of this evil is the desire for things which are to change and pass away. Third,—This desire and the evil which follows it are not inevitable; for men if they choose can arrive at "Nirvana," where both the desire and the evil cease. Fourth,—There is a fixed and certain method to adopt, by pursuing which men attain this end without possibility of failure.

This fixed and certain method of emancipation, or Buddha's way of life, according to the teacher himself consisted of eight steps. First,—Right belief, or the correct faith. Second,—Right judgment, or wise application of this faith to life. Third,—Right utterance, or perfect truth in all that is said and done. Fourth,—Right motives, or proposing always a proper end and aim. Fifth,—Right occupation, or an outward life not involving sin. Sixth, — Right obedience, or faithful observance of duty. Seventh, — Right memory, or a proper recollection of the past conduct. Eighth, —Right meditation, or keeping the mind fixed on permanent truth.

He also laid down five other commandments,—"Do not kill, steal, commit adultery, lie, and do not become intoxicated."

Buddha died at eighty, beloved, mourned and followed by multitudes. He deserves the love of mankind for his life and teachings and for having done all he could to banish the terrible "Caste System" from India, which has been and is such a stumbling-block to her progress.

—*Rev. Frederic W. Smith.*

JOY

By HILDA CONKLING

Joy is not a thing you can see.
It is what you feel when you watch the
waves breaking;
Or when you peer through a net of woven
violet stems
In spring grass.
It is not sunlight, nor moonlight,
But a separate shining.
Joy lives behind people's eyes.

CORRESPONDENTS AND APPEALS

MRS. JOHN A. MCCADDIN, *Chairman*, 21 Ashfield Street, Roslindale, Mass.

A correspondent writing to the Exchange for the first time should always give as reference the name and address of her minister.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice should be sent to Headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., and to those persons who have been sending letters and reading matter.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of its magazine by addressing letters asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who disobeys this rule will be dropped from the list, and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by the Central Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to the Chairman of this Department.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

APPEALS

1. Bessie Stewart, Rt. 4, Box 187, Dayton, Tenn., wishes to thank every one who has remembered her in the past. She appreciates the *Cheerful Letter* each month, and would like some scraps and embroidery material.

2. I am confined to my room in The Haven, a Home for Incurables. I am interested in the history of Connecticut, and would like to learn what branch of the Christian Church was favored by Israel Putnam and other famous men of his time. Will someone please send me a History of Connecticut? Mrs. Carrie J. Beaman, The Haven, Abington, Conn.

3. Mrs. Walter R. May, Peach Bottom, Pa., writes that her children are in school and she gets very lonely. She would like some easy sewing, as she is not very strong.

4. I am asking for quilt scraps, stamped pieces and bits of thread for my two youngest daughters, ages 14 and 16. My eldest daughter married and we will miss her this winter. Reading or any kind of cheer will be gratefully received. My nine-year-old boy would like some puzzles or cards. Mrs. John Howell, Silas Creek, N. C.

5. Mrs. Minnie Vaughan, Jr., Rt. 2, Stuart, Va., has four little girls all under seven years. Her mother-in-law is 92 years old and her husband is suffering with rheumatism. She will be grateful for quilt pieces, thread, cards or reading.

6. I receive the *Cheerful Letter* and am glad to get it. I will be 84 years old February 16th and for 40 years I have enjoyed the *Cheerful Letter*, and have made some pleasant "pen friends." Now I cannot leave my room without help. Mrs. H. C. Martin, Vinton, Va.

7. Mrs. Willie Cooper, Higginson, Ark., would appreciate embroidery thread, quilt scraps or old sacks. She has two boys, 6 and 11 years old, and two girls, 12 and 16, who would like reading matter.

8. I would love to get some story and picture books for my three boys, ages 5, 7 and 9, and my girl 12 years old. I should like some crocheting and embroidery thread, if it is not asking too much. Mrs. James Huneycutt, Rt. 2, Mt. Gilead, N. C.

9. Mrs Jennie Spencer, Rt. 1, Lawsonville, N. C., wishes to be remembered this winter with books, magazines and quilt pieces. She says it all helps so much to pass away the lonely hours. She

is 67 years old and has to crawl on her hands and knees. She has had rheumatism since she was nine years old and has not walked a step.

10. I want to thank my *Cheerful Letter* friends for past favors and the wonderful help your magazine has been to me. I am having a problem to get my children in the habit of reading and would appreciate some help in this work. Would prefer 4th, 5th and 6th grade reading matter. If anyone could send me "Wee Wisdom" when finished with it, I should be most grateful. Mrs. Lorraine West, Rt. 6, Cumming, Ga.

11. Mrs. Lessie Rea, Spencer, Va., would like a few quilt pieces, bits of thread, or anything to take up her time. Her boys would enjoy the *American Magazine* if someone could send it to them after it has been read.

12. My husband has heart trouble and is not able to work. Would someone send my two little girls, 8 and 10 years old, some pencils and tablets, or anything that would help them in their schoolwork? I should like some old sacks for quilt linings, scraps or old stockings. Mrs. Lanta Sturgills, Sturgills, N. C.

13. Mrs. Maudie Sizemore, Sturgills, N. C., wishes to thank all who have sent her cheer in the past. All her children have left home except the little boy who goes to school. She would appreciate some old silk stockings to make rugs out of. She says her health is some better.

14. I live in a very lonely place and am in poor health, and can't enter into the pleasures of the outside world. Therefore, I would be glad to have reading matter, bits of thread, or scraps for patchwork. Mrs. Charles Neaves, Rt. 2, Box 79, Grassy Creek, N. C.

15. Mrs. Anull Wright, Bassetts, Va., writes that she and her husband have been ill all this year, and can't do much work. She has seven children and would be glad to receive books and cards for them, also reading for her husband. She would like patchwork to make quilts.

16. I am still caring for my blind aunt. My aged father, who lives with us, recently broke his leg and cannot walk a step yet. I enjoy making hooked rugs, quilts and embroidering. Thanks to the one who sent me the *Needlecraft* and *Woman's Home Companion.* My little two-year-old girl would appreciate a toy. Mrs. John R. May, Clifton, N. C.

17. I am a little girl, nine years old, and my father and mother are not well. I would be more than pleased if some good *Cheerful Letter* friends would remember me and my little four-year-old brother and two sisters, ages 6 and 11. My mother would appreciate cotton scraps for patchwork, and good reading. Annie F. Simpson, R.F.D. 5, Box 5, Farmville, Va.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Mrs. Lena T. Woods from Martinsville, to The Hollow, Va.

Mrs. T. C. Phillips from Formosa, to Jerusalem, Ark.

Mr. Fred R. Osborn from 801 N. Harwood St., to 3306 Junius St., Dallas, Texas.

Mrs. C. A. Hill from Norwood, to Rt. 2, Polkton, N. C.

Mrs. Cora C. Greer from Rocks, to Street, Md.

Mrs. Ann Carter from Chillicothe, to Rt. 1, c/o Jack Harris, Texas.

Mrs. Emma Davis from Tolar, to Granbury, Texas.

Mrs. J. M. Langston from Era, to 1121 N. Commerce St., Gainesville, Texas.

Mrs. Lucy Howell from Jefferson, to Silas Creek, N. C.

CHANGES OF NAME AND ADDRESS

Miss Grace Womac is now Mrs. Grace Coffey, Box 211, Umatilla, Fla.

A Boston man was fishing in Northern Maine recently. He caught a big Lake trout, the biggest he had ever landed in his long and busy life. He was elated. He was so delighted that he telegraphed his wife: *"I've got one. Weighs eight pounds and it is a beauty!"*

He received the following answer: *"So have I. Weighs nine pounds. Not a beauty, looks like you. Come home."*

"MY DAILY PRAYER THIS YEAR"

"This coming year I'd like to be a friend
to everyone;
I'd like to feel each day well spent at
setting of the sun;
I'd like to know that I have done at least
one kindly deed,
Before I lay me down to sleep that I
have given heed—
To some one's cry for sympathy, or
friendship or that I
Have made the day seem brighter just
to some chance passer-by,
And that the world is better still in just
some little way,
Because I've tried to live the very best I
could each day.
"I'd like to be a ray of light when skies
are overcast,
I'd like to help some one who failed to
blot out all the past,
To start again despite the storms, and
find the skies are blue,
To know that in this good old world
there's lots that's fine and true,
I'd like to be the kind of person every-
one will love,
And make the world seem just a little
more like heaven above;
I'd like in all my dealings to be true and
just and fair,
That God will help me do these things
shall be my daily prayer."

BIRDS IN AN INDIAN GARDEN

Most fascinating are the various birds which come to an Indian garden. Tiniest of these is the little sunbird, which sucks honey from the flowers as does a butterfly. Indeed, he is little bigger than one, for the flowers scarcely bend under his fragile weight. Some of these sunbirds are golden yellow, others are bright dark blue with lovely black sheen. They love the tall hedge of poinsettia and are always hovering over its brilliant scarlet leaves and sucking the sweetness from the orange flowers in their center.

Another astonishing little bird, almost as small, is the tailor or dirzee bird. He likes best to build his nest in the long leaf of the canna, and cunningly he does it. He folds the pointed top of the leaf downward, so that the rain will glance off its surface instead of pouring into the nest; and then he sews the edges of the leaves together with grasses, or with thread, if he can pick up any from your veranda. Inside this the nest is made, and so cleverly and neatly that, although it is often only a foot or so from the ground, it is difficult to spot it unless you have seen it in the making.

The hoopoe is another striking bird, with a wonderfully handsome crest on its head and a beautiful glazed sheen on its black and white plumage. These birds have a long beak with which they peck sharply into the cracks of the hard baked earth in search of food.

Kingfishers, too, will come to the garden if—as is often the case—there is a well of fresh water in it. Often they will build their nest in the brick work of the well; and it is lovely to watch these swift and graceful little fellows, with their brilliant blue and black coloring, diving to catch their food.

Even at night you have visitors, for it is then that the screech owls come out to feed. Under the Gold Mohur tree we had an electric light, and round this crowded innumerable flying creatures. Sitting just outside the radius of light, we laughed to see the owls walking round after big beetles, which they never attempted to eat, looking at them speculatively with their heads on one side in a comical way. Every now and then, they would stop and thrust their heads back and forward with a funny movement that looked like a jerky bow.

One little family of owls came every evening for some weeks; and, after taking their fill, would sit together on a low branch, making little throaty sounds, so different from the terrific screech with which they call to each other in the night, and watch while we ate our dinner.

Thinking of all these things of beauty and interest, it is small wonder that people in the East will go to much trouble to cultivate a garden and put up, as philosophically as possible, with many stumbling blocks; for they are all part of the day's work. And if you have to

interrupt your work to rush out and call the unobservant mali and coolie to drive off a party of monkeys which are capering along the wall, or to direct the operation of persuading toward the gate a wandering cow which was just going to snatch a square meal—well, it only adds fun and adventure to a quiet day!

—*Clipped.*

A NEW YEAR'S WISH

Health enough to make work a pleasure; wealth enough to support your needs; strength enough to battle with difficulties and overcome them; patience enough to toil until some good is accomplished; charity that shall see some good in your neighbor; cheerfulness that shall make others glad; love that shall move you to be useful and helpful; faith that shall make real the things of God; and hope that shall remove all anxious fears concerning the future. It is not doing the things we like to do, but liking the things we have to do that makes life blessed. *Clipped*

RECIPE FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Take 12 fine, full-grown months, see that these are thoroughly free from all old memories of bitterness, rancor, hate and jealousy; cleanse them completely from every clinging spite; pick off all specks of pettiness and littleness; in short, see that these months are freed from all the past—have them as fresh and clean as when they first came from the great storehouse of time.

Cut these months into 30 or 31 equal parts. This batch will keep for just one year. Do not attempt to make up the whole batch at one time (so many spoil the entire lot in this way), but prepare one day at a time as follows:

Into each day put 12 parts of faith, 11 of patience, 10 of courage, nine of work (some people omit this ingredient and so spoil the flavor of the rest), eight of hope, seven of fidelity, six of liberality, five of kindness, four of rest (leaving this out is like leaving the oil out of the salad—don't do it), three of prayer, two of meditation and one well-selected resolution. If you have no conscientious scruples, put in about a teaspoonful of good spirits, a dash of fun, a pinch of folly, a sprinkling of play, and a heaping cupful of good humor.

Pour into the whole love ad libitum and mix with a vim. Cook thoroughly in a fervent heat; garnish with a few smiles and a sprig of joy; then serve with quietness, unselfishness and cheerfulness and a Happy New Year is a certainty. *Selected*

A SMILE

By Elizabeth R. Bouret

A little smile went forth today;
It touched a heart that was worn and sad,
And met response that was warm and glad.
Was it yours? Was it mine?

It smote the frown on the brow of one
Who felt its power and passed it on;
And a little child, with tear-filled eyes,
Forgot her tears in her glad surprise.

It checked a bitter, unkind word,
And the sharp retort was never heard.
That little smile, like soothing balm,
Touched quivering pain, left peaceful calm.
Was that loving smile yours? Or mine?

As ripples pass on from wave to wave,
Till the distant shore the waters lave,
So the smile passed on, from heart to heart;
Each who received in giving had part.

And as sunbeams speed from east to west,
So the loving smile will never rest
Till complete its task, at set of sun,
When comes the night, and day is done.

For, like a circle, Love has no end;
It blesses alike both foe and friend.
Oh, wondrous the power of Love divine!
May this power be yours, my friend, and mine.

WHEN EXPLORERS TRY THE ART OF KAYAK-PADDLING

Seal hunting by means of the kayak and harpoon, says a writer in Discovery, is an essential feature of Eskimo culture, especially in regions where the occurrence of moving pack-ice renders other forms of hunting the seal difficult or impossible. Their ability to construct and manage this type of boat has long been a source of wonder to Europeans, who have been content until quite recently to consider the art of kayaking as unattainable by them, and indeed unnecessary.

The successful use of kayaks on the two Watkins expeditions to East Greenland has now introduced a new element in Arctic exploration, and has made the ability to use a kayak a useful addition to the qualifications of a polar explorer. It has been found that Europeans can become as expert in the management of a kayak as the Eskimo, and that by making use of the native method of hunting it is possible to "live off the land" to an extent never dreamed of by earlier explorers. Experience has shown, however, that it takes a long time to learn kayaking in cold water, and it also takes a long time to have a kayak built.

Before the air-route expedition demonstrated the value of learning the art of kayaking, the only Europeans to attempt it had been Nansen and his companions after their crossing Greenland in 1888 while waiting at Godthaab for transport back to Norway. But they never mastered the art of rolling, and when hunting always made use of an outrigger to prevent any possibility of being overturned. Kayaks were also used by Nansen and Johanssen during their famous trek from the Fram in 1895-6.

Eskimo kayaks and the method of rolling them were first described by Hans Egede in 1745 and it is believed that the boat has changed very little for many centuries. Few relics of kayaks are ever found and we are thus ignorant of the different stages of their evolution. Possibly the earliest complete specimen of a full size kayak now existing is one taken in the North Sea in the eighteenth century and now in the Anthropological Museum of Marischal College in Aberdeen. It is described as a canoe taken at sea, with an Indian man in it, about the beginning of this century. He was brought alive to Aberdeen, but died soon after his arrival, and could give no account of himself. He is supposed to have come from the Labrador coast, and to have lost his way at sea.

The occupant of this kayak and other men like him, who occasionally appeared on the shores of the Orkneys and the north coast of Scotland, were given the name of "finmen" by those who saw them, but it is now proved by an examination of the kayak and the hunting equipment taken with it, that it must have come from the east coast of Greenland, somewhere along the stretch between Angmagssalik and Kangerdugsuak. This is proved beyond doubt by the harpoon, which is of the type used to this day by the older generation of hunters in that district. The kayak is still used by the sea-hunting Eskimo throughout the Arctic, although along the Alaskan and part of the Canadian coast, it is giving place to the various types of wooden boats which have been introduced by Europeans. It is in the comparatively ice-free waters inhabited by some of the eastern Eskimos that the kayak has reached its highest state of proficiency both in construction and use.

The best kayak men are to be found in Greenland, possibly those inhabiting the country in the vicinity of Cape Farewell, in the extreme south of the island. These men spend the greater part of the year in their kayaks, exposed to the bad weather and stormy seas of the North Atlantic. They have, therefore, evolved a different kayak technique from the people inhabiting the more northern parts of the Eskimo territory, where the kayak can only be used for a short part of the year, and where big seas, like those of the North Atlantic, are not common. While the present form of administration continues in East Greenland, the art of kayaking can never die out, as

the people are not allowed to become dependent on the importations of the Europeans; they are still self-respecting hunters, supporting themselves and their families by hunting by their old methods.

All the Eskimo carry rifles on their kayaks, but in the summer a seal will sink as soon as it is dead. The hunter must therefore get within harpoon range before attacking it, and many of the more expert hunters will harpoon their seals immediately without shooting them first. Seals are nearly always too shy for it to be possible to get within harpoon range from any kind of boat other than a kayak. This of course applies to coastal hunting in open water, and not to the hunting of bladdernose seals while lying on the pack-ice, as is done by Norwegian and Newfoundland sealers.

As any person proposing to live off the country in the north will meet with the coastal conditions rather than the pack-ice conditions, it is absolutely necessary for him to learn the use of the kayak and Eskimo hunting methods. The advantage of this is made apparent to any person reading the history of exploration in the north, with its long list of tragedies and sufferings, most of which could have been avoided if Eskimo living and hunting methods had been adopted.

In January, 1933, Mr. Augustine Courtauld of the British Arctic Air Route Expediiton, presented his Eskimo kayak to the Scott Polar Research Institute at Cambridge, and a few days later an undergraduate of St. John's asked if he might take measurements of it in order to make one of his own. He had finished it by mid-February, using oiled canvas instead of sealskin. Constant practice in the Cam, in the arctic weather of Lent term, enabled him to devise a means of rolling, not quite the same way as the Eskimo use, but efficient enough. He went further still, and taught himself to execute the roll with the throwing stick instead of the paddle, and finally with the hand alone, a feat which only a very few of the Eskimo can manage. In October the returned members of the late Mr. Watkins's Lake Fjord Expedition, who are skilled kayakers, were in Cambridge, and were much interested to hear of the local developments. They brought their Eskimo kayaks and they spent many hours on the river, comparing styles. "Slow motion" films were taken of the different methods and of the trick rolls, and as these were mostly taken from a high diving board, they show, better than any diagrams or verbal description, the movement of the paddle in the process of rolling.

The Eskimo builders, dependent as they are on what driftwood they can find, use some very skillful jointing, and as few lashings as possible, the framework being held together to a large extent by the tautening of the sealskins which are put on wet, dried to secure contraction, and then treated with blubber and fat.

It is explained in The Polar Record that the term "rolling the kayak" used to describe the action of setting the kayak upright again after a capsize, is an unfortunate one, implying as it does that the process consists of the man sweeping round under the water, and using such momentum as might be attainable to aid in righting himself. In practice the property of momentum does not come into the matter at all, and it is actually easier to pause in the upside-down position before making the motions for righting oneself, and it should be possible to come up in the same direction as that from which the capsize took place.

It is very easy to forget that the art of rolling the kayak, so often practised as a trick, is indeed the essence of kayak hunting, since without ability to right the kayak, the hunter would be drowned at the first accidental capsize. Strangely enough, many of the Eskimos themselves never learn to roll, and need always to hunt in couples, one man to rescue the other if necessary. It is estimated that more than half the deaths among the Eskimo men in East Greenland are due to drowning in kayaks.

—*Boston Transcript.*

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

A NEW YEAR'S WISH

Bruce Carlton, on the first school day after the Christmas vacation, plumped his bag of schoolbooks down on the last vacant seat of the home-bound suburban train, and, with equal vigor, plumped himself down by the window beside them. "Same old grind! Same old books! Same old everything! Wish I never had to go to school another day!" Bruce, to the unhappiness of his family, had made so poor a showing in his first year of high school that he had been sent on trial to a boys' school in the near-by city.

"Perhaps other surroundings, other companions, will wake him up," said Father.

"Perhaps," Mother had echoed doubtfully. "Something has got to wake him up. It will be some outside thing—something we haven't planned — that will some day turn the trick. That's always the way."

"We certainly have planned our hardest," agreed Father. "Let's believe in the unseen, unknown miracle, then! Let's believe it will wake him up this new year. I guess you're right. He's got to wake up from inside himself."

So, on this first afternoon of the new school year, Bruce looked gloomily out of the window, speculating darkly on what short cuts to attainment a boy might take which would obviate all further intercourse with books.

"Choice scenery," he muttered to himself, as he looked upon mile after mile of unlovely back yards, and layers of tenement back porches strung with bedraggled washings and clambering children.

Suddenly three muffled toots from the engine caught his straying attention, and, as if in answer, a boy put his head out of a window in one of the endless tenements they were passing, and waved joyously.

"Wonder if he was answering those engine toots!" Bruce was miraculously transformed into an alert, interested boy. "Sick. I could see his bed pulled up close to that window." Bruce, craning his head out of his own window, hoped for another glimpse of a face that, in one fleeting minute, had stamped itself on his mind. "But what's he so happy about, if he's as sick as he looks? Never saw anybody look happier." Bruce's thoughts, as, twenty minutes later, he jumped off at his station, were in a strange tangle. But his curiosity was roused, and he determined to watch for that smiling face the next afternoon.

Sure enough, the next day, Bruce, eagerly watching the backs of tenements which were bewilderingly alike, heard again the three soft, quick toots; saw again the gay, white face of the sick boy as he leaned from bed to wave. But this time, there was an added mystery. Besides the gay salute, the boy nodded vigorously, and pointed down to the little square of squalid back yard directly under his window.

Bruce knew that the easiest way to solve his mystery would be to arrive at the station next day early enough to stroll past the engine and make friends with the engineer who signalled the boy by engine toots. But Bruce preferred to find out for himself, rather than ask anyone any question, unless driven by absolute necessity.

So, on the next afternoon, he resolved, at the engine's signal, to watch the tiny square of back yard under the boy's window rather than to watch for the boy.

"How he ever knows when to toot!" thought Bruce, leaning out of his window. "Look as much alike as—" The three toots interrupted his thoughts, and Bruce's eyes were quick enough this time to see a parcel drop neatly into the back yard, and also, before the train made the next curve, to catch a glimpse of the boy's radiant face.

"Well!" said Bruce to himself. And, after a full minute, "Well! I'm a pretty good shot myself."

The next afternoon, Bruce reached the station in time to stroll down the

platform to the engine. Leaning from the engine cab was a grey-haired, blue-jumpered engineer who met Bruce's upward glance with a friendly smile.

When the train started, Bruce, alert at his window, proved, at the engine's signal, now grown familiar, that he was indeed a good shot. Pitching a brown-wrapped parcel out of the window, he saw it land plump in the middle of the dingy little back yard, and was just in time, before the train whisked him out of view, to catch a glimpse of the surprise on the sick boy's face, as he looked downward at this unexpected gift from the sky.

Saturday came next, and Bruce, to his mother's astonishment, instead of dashing off on his bicycle, hung around uneasily for the postman, and even ran down the block when that blue-clad figure came in sight.

And yes, there it was, the letter to himself that he hoped for. Tearing it open, he read:

"DEAR BRUCE:

I never had such a nice surprise as when you threw that puzzle and book into my back yard yesterday. How did you know about me? My father always toots his engine to me, and sometimes he throws old magazines that get left in the train, to me. And I liked your letter best of all, and if you would come to see me, I'd like that better than anything. It's number 27 Grant Avenue.

Your unknown friend,
JERRY LANE."

"Mother!" Bruce burst into the doorway and handed her the mail. "I'm going to see a sick friend of mine down on Grant Avenue. Got any old magazines? Oh, I know, I'll take some from the pile down cellar. Yes, I'll be back for lunch."

Arrived at Number 27, Bruce pressed the bell-button and then wondered desperately why he had come and what in the world he should say. But the door clicked open from above and there was nothing for it but to mount the stairs.

"One more flight!" A woman's pleasant voice guided him from the second to the third floor, and Jerry's mother, waiting for him, smiled as pleasantly as the rest of the family.

"Jerry can't wait to see you. He has never had anything so pleasant and exciting in all the years he has been in bed."

"Years!" gasped Bruce, but the next minute he was in Jerry's clean, bare room, sitting down awkwardly in the chair Mrs. Lane drew to the bedside for him, before she vanished.

"Three years in bed!" said Bruce, after Jerry had told him of the fall which had so hurt his spine. "I think I'm killed if I land in bed for three days."

"Oh, well!" Jerry smiled as he spoke. "You get used to it. And there's lots of time to do things."

"Do things?" repeated Bruce blankly, wondering what on earth he should find to do, if he were anchored in bed for three months, let alone three years.

"Well, mostly books, of course," admitted Jerry. "Anybody can get books out of a library, whether he's in bed or out. Never knew what fun books are, till I got laid up."

Bruce, staring, was suddenly ashamed of his own unfriendliness toward books. What he said was: "What kind do you like? I've got lots at home I'd like to lend you. Stories, or what?"

"Stories are great," said Jerry. "But I've got to study, haven't I? The doctor doesn't know yet whether I've got to stay in bed always or not. But there are plenty of things you can be if you get stuck in bed."

"Are there?" asked Bruce. "What?"

"Well," went on Jerry cheerfully, but a little shyly, as if so great a confidence must be made carefully, "I'm going to be an architect."

Bruce, seeing in an inward flash the endless row of cheap, hideous tenements in which this boy lived, was stricken to complete silence.

As if reading his thoughts, Jerry went on: "Now you take this mile of houses along here. Ever see anything so homely? Comfortable enough," he added, as if in quick loyalty to his home. "But why can't they be better looking? Ever try

to draw a house?"

Bruce shook his head.

"My father's making me a bed table I can draw on. I've got lots of plans in my head I want to draw. What are you going to be?" he asked suddenly.

And Bruce's amazing answer was: "I was kicking about being anything. Maybe school's not so bad, after all."

A month later, Bruce brought home a much improved school report.

"Thank goodness!" said Mrs. Carlton, heartily, as she ran her eye over it.

"You'd better thank Jerry," said Bruce with manly honesty.

Talking together that evening, Mr. Carlton said: "I always knew the lad would wake up in time, though he has slumbered longer than most."

"And I always said," Mrs. Carlton reminded him, "that it would be something unexpected that would strike the spark. But who could ever have dreamed of such a miracle as Bruce's finding Jerry for a friend?"

"Well," said Mrs. Carlton happily, "my very best New Year's wish for every drifting boy is that he may wake up, from the inside—be his own compass, instead of an unwilling pawn. And wake up through such a friendship! What greater miracle could there be?" Happiness shown in her face.

Could Bruce and Jerry have heard them, they doubtless would have paid scant heed to their words. For they were happy in their own new world, entirely absorbed in plans Jerry had tried for a month to work out.

"Funny if we both turned out to be architects, wouldn't it?" said Bruce.

ROSE BROOKS in *The Christian Register.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

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